

# NASA News

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## **NASA SUCCESSFULLY DEMONSTRATES HIGH ALTITUDE SOUNDING ROCKET**

The recent successful flight test of a MK1 Black Brant rocket motor by the NASA Sounding Rocket Program enhances the Agency's capabilities to conduct complex science missions at altitudes in excess of 310 miles and many cases more than 620 miles.

The test, conducted at the NASA Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Va., qualified the high altitude ignition of the rocket motor. The third stage Black Brant motor was ignited at approximately 48,000 feet lifting the 600 pound diagnostic payload to an apogee of 344 miles. The total flight time for the mission was approximately 15 minutes.

The relatively low-cost, high performance sounding rocket vehicles also enable sophisticated missions that involve multiple free-flying payload bodies that allow unique in-situ scientific measurements to be made. Payloads include attitude control systems for precise orientation of the sensors; complex boom systems; and multi-link, 10 megabits per second telemetry systems that enable high resolution measurements of scientific phenomena. The program also flies 1500 pound telescope payloads that require arc-second pointing to altitudes of 217 miles at the White Sands Missile Range, N.M., and sites around the world.

The NASA Sounding Rocket Program launched 21 missions for NASA and other government agencies in Fiscal Year 2006 with a success rate of 100%.

For information about the NASA sounding rocket program, visit:

<http://www.wff.nasa.gov/code810/>

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